This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`

STANFORD UNIVERSITY
LIBRARIES

From F. F. Brown.

Xmas, 1906.

STANFORD UNIVERSITY
LIBRARIES

From F. F. Brown.

Ames, 1906.

MAXIM GORKI

Illustrated Cameos of Literature

Edited by George Brandes

Small Crown 8vo. Price 1s. 6d. net each vol.

FURTHER VOLUMES TO FOLLOW ON

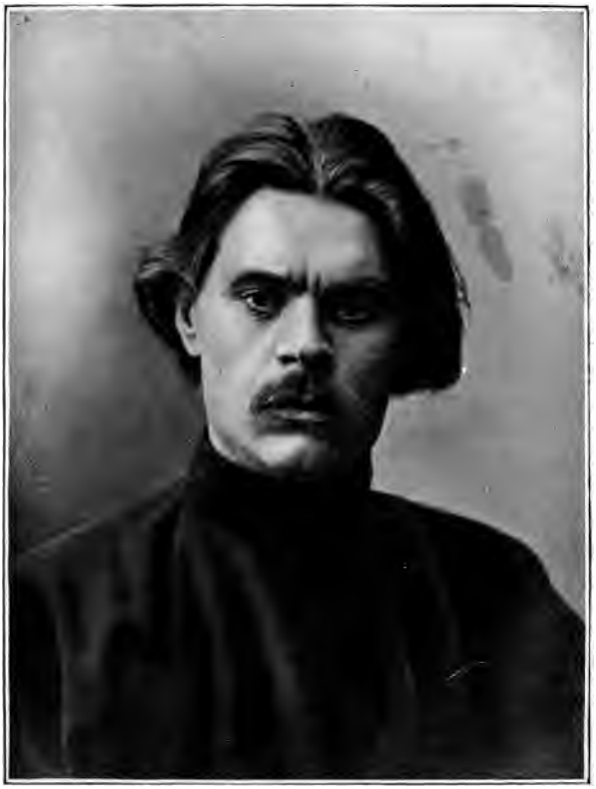
RICHARD WAGNER — ARISTOTLE

OSCAR WILDE — JAPANESE POETRY

A. C. SWINBURNE — ANATOLE FRANCE

BAUDELAIRE, &c.

LONDON: WILLIAM HEINEMANN



MAXIM GORKI

Frontispiece

Illustrated Cameos of Literature. Edited by George Brandes

MAXIM GORKI

BY

HANS OSTWALD

TRANSLATED BY

FRANCES A. WELBY

WILLIAM HEINEMANN · 1905

PE 3125
.O82

INTRODUCTION

T CANNOT BE DENIED that the academic expression "Literature" is an ill-favoured word. It involuntarily calls up the Antithesis of Life, of Personal Experience, of the Simple Expression of Thought and Feeling. With what scorn does Verlaine exclaim in his Poems:

"And the Rest is only Literature."

The word is not employed here in Verlaine's sense. The Impersonal is to be excluded from this Collection. Notwithstanding its solid basis, the modern mode of the Essay gives full play of personal freedom in the handling of its matter.

In writing an entire History of Literature, one is unable to take equal interest in all its details. Much is included because it belongs there, but has to be described and criticised of necessity, not desire. While the Author concentrates himself con amore *upon the parts which, in accordance with his temperament, attract his sympathies, or rivet his attention by their characteristic types, he accepts the rest as unavoidable stuffing, in order to escape the reproach of ignorance or defect. In the Essay there is no padding. Nothing is put in from external considerations. The Author here admits no temporising with his subject.*

However foreign the theme may be to him, there is always some point of contact between himself and the strange Personality. There is certain to be some crevice through which he can insinuate himself into this alien nature, after the fashion of the cunning actor with his part. He

tries to feel its feelings, to think its thoughts, to divine its instincts, to discover its impulses and its will—then retreats from it once more, and sets down what he has gathered.

Or he steeps himself intimately in the subject, till he feels that the Alien Personality is beginning to live in him. It may be months before this happens; but it comes at last. Another Being fills him; for the time his soul is captive to it, and when he begins to express himself in words, he is freed, as it were, from an evil dream, the while he is fulfilling a cherished duty.

It is a welcome task to one who feels himself congenial to some Great or Significant Man, to give expression to his cordial feelings and his inspiration. It becomes an obsession with him to communicate to others what he sees in his Idol, his Divinity. Yet it is not Inspiration for his Subject alone that makes the Essayist. Some point that has no marked attraction

in itself may be inexpressibly precious to the Author as Material, presenting itself to him with some rare stamp, or unexpected feature, that affords a special vehicle for the expression of his temperament. Every man favours what he can describe or set forth better than his neighbours; each seeks the Stuff that calls out his capacities, and gives him opportunity to show what he is capable of. Whether the Personality portrayed be at his Antipodes, whether or no he have one single Idea in common with him, matters nothing. The picture may in sooth be most successful when the Original is entirely remote from the delineator, in virtue of contrary temperament, or totally different mentality,—just because the traits of such a nature stand out the more sharply to the eye of the tranquil observer.

Since Montaigne wrote the first Essays, this Form has permeated every country. In France, Sainte-Beuve, in North America, Emerson, has

founded his School. In Germany, Hillebranat follows the lead of Sainte-Beuve, while Hermann Grimm is a disciple of Emerson. The Essayists of To-day are Legion.

It is hard to say whether what is set out in this brief and agreeable mode will offer much resistance to the ravages of Time. In any case its permanence is not excluded. It is conceivable that men, when condemned to many months' imprisonment, might arm themselves with the Works of Sainte-Beuve for their profitable entertainment, rather than with the Writings of any other Frenchman, since they give the Quintessence of many Books and many Temperaments. As to the permanent value of the Literature of To-day, we can but express conjectures, or at most opinions, that are binding upon none. We may hope that After-Generations will interest themselves not merely in the Classic Forms of Poetry and History, but also in this less monu-

mental Mode of the Criticism of our Era. And if this be not the case, we may console ourselves in advance with the reflection that the After-World is not of necessity going to be cleverer than the Present—that we have indeed no guarantee that it will be able to appreciate the Qualities of our Contemporaries quite according to their merits.

So much that is New, and to us Unknown, will occupy it in the Future!

GEORGE BRANDES.

Paris, May 1904.

ILLUSTRATIONS

1.	Maxim Gorki	*Frontispiece*	
2.	Maxim Gorki (in 1900)	*To face page*	14
3.	Beggar Collecting for a Church Fund	,,	20
4.	Tartar Day-Labourer	,,	24
5.	Tramps—the Seated Figure is the Original of Luka	,,	30
6.	A Page from Gorki's Last Work	,,	34
7.	The Bare-footed Brigade on the Volga-Quay, at Nijni Novgorod	,,	40
8.	Love-Scene between Polja and Nil, Act 3 of "The Bezemenovs"	,,	46
9.	Gambling-Scene, Act 2 of "The Doss-house"	,,	50
10.	A Confabulation, Act 2 of "The Doss-house"	,,	52
11.	Concluding Scene, Act 3 of "The Doss-house"	,,	56

12. The Actor, in "The Doss-house" *To face page* 58
13. Vasilissa, the Keeper of "The Doss-house" „ 62
14. Nastja, servant in "The Doss-house" „ 66
15. The Baron, in "The Doss-house" „ 70
16. Letter to Herr Max Reinhardt „ 74

ITHIN THE LAST FEW years a new and memorable note has been sounded among the familiar strains of Russian literature. It has produced a regeneration, penetrating and quickening the whole. The author who proclaimed the new voice from his very soul has not been rejected. He was welcomed on all sides with glad and ready attention. Nor was it his compatriots alone who gave ear to him. Other countries, Germany in particular, have not begrudged him a hearing; as has too often been the case for native genius. The young Russian was speedily accounted one of the most widely read in his own land and in adjacent countries.

Success has rarely been achieved so promptly as by Maxim Gorki. The path

has seldom been so smooth and free from obstacles.

Not but that Gorki has had his struggles. But what are those few years, in comparison with the decades through which others have had, and still have, to strive and wrestle? His fight has rather been for the attainment of a social status, of intellectual self-mastery and freedom, than for artistic recognition. He was recognised, indeed, almost from the first moment when he came forward with his characteristic productions. Nay, he was more than recognised. He was extolled, and loved, and honoured. His works were devoured.

This startling success makes a closer consideration and appreciation of the author's works and personality incumbent on us.

A black, sullen day in March. Rain and vapour. No movement in the air. The horizon is veiled in the grey mists that rise

MAXIM GORKI (IN 1900)

from the earth, and blend in the near distance with the dropping pall of the Heavens.

And yet there is a general sense of coming Spring. The elder-bushes are bursting, the buds swelling. A topaz shimmer plays amid the shadowy fringes of the light birch stems, and on the budding tops of the lime-trees. The bushes are decked with catkins. The boughs of the chestnut glisten with pointed reddish buds. Fresh green patches are springing up amid the yellow matted grass of the road-side.

The air is chill, and saturated with moisture. Everything is oppressed, and exertion is a burden. . . .

Suddenly a wind springs up, and tears the monotonously tinted curtains of the sky asunder, tossing the clouds about in its powerful arms like a child at play, and unveiling a glimpse of the purest Heaven . . . only to roll up a thick dark ball of

cloud again next moment. Everything is in motion.

The mist clears off, the trees are shaken by the wind till the drops fall off in spray.

The sky gets light, and then clouds over again.

But the weary, demoralising, despairing monotony has vanished.

Life is here.

Spring has come.

With all its atmosphere, with all its force and vigour, with its battles, and its faith in victory.

It is somewhat after this fashion that the personality of the young Russian author, and his influence on Russia, and on Russian Literature, may be characterised.

In order rightly to grasp the man and his individual methods, together with his significance for his mother-country, we must know

the environment and the relations on which Gorki entered. Thus only shall we understand him, and find the key to his great success in Russia, and the after-math of this success in foreign countries.

Maxim Gorki is now just thirty-seven years old. Ten years ago he was employed in the repairing works of the railway in Tiflis as a simple artisan. To-day he ranks among the leading intellects of Russia.

This is an abrupt leap, the crossing of a deep cleft which separates two worlds that tower remote on either side. The audacity of the spring can only be realised when we reflect that Maxim Gorki worked his way up from the lowest stratum, and never had any regular schooling.

The most subtle analysis of Gorki's talent would, however, be inadequate to cover his full significance as a writer. It is only in connection with the evolution of Russian

society and Russian literature that Gorki, as a phenomenon, becomes intelligible.

The educated Russian does not regard his national literature merely as the intellectual flower of his nation; it must essentially be a mirror of actual social occurrences, of the cultural phase in which any particular work originated.

The Russian author does not conceive his task to lie exclusively in pandering to the æsthetic enjoyment of his readers, in exciting and diverting them, and in providing them with sensational episodes. Literature of this type finds no home in the Russia of to-day. Since she first possessed a literature of her own, Russia has demanded something more from her writers. An author must be able to express the shades of public opinion. It is his task to give voice and form to what is circulating through the various social classes, and setting them in motion. What they

cannot voice in words, what is only palpitating and thrilling through them, is what he must express in language; and his business is to create men from the universal tendencies. Nay, more, it is his task to reorganise these tendencies.

This explains the general and lively interest felt in Russia for the productions of *belles lettres*. This form of literature is regarded as the mirror of the various phases of that astounding development which Russia has accomplished during the last sixty years.

First came the reforms of the Fifties and Sixties. Serfdom was abolished, class distinctions were largely broken up, local self-government was initiated. So many reforms were introduced in the departments of Justice, of Instruction, of Credit and Commerce, that the ground was prepared for a totally new Russia. A vigorous blossoming of Russian literature coincided with this period of fermentation. Turgeniev, Gontscharov, Leo

Tolstoi, and Dostoevsky found rich nutriment for their imaginative talent in the fresh-turned prolific soil of Russian Society. With, and alongside of, them a number of no less gifted authors throve uninterruptedly, till the reaction in the second half of the Sixties and in the Seventies fell like a frosty rime upon the luxurious blooms, and shrivelled them. The giants were silenced one by one. Leo Tolstoi remained the sole survivor.

With him none but the epigones, the friends of the people, worked on. Few writers attained to any eminence. Among such as also won a hearing in Germany must be mentioned Vladimir Korolenko and Chekhov. These two belong to the group known as "the Men of the Eighties."

These years, which immediately preceded the appearance of Gorki, form part of the most gloomy period of modern Russian history. Blackest reaction followed the desperate struggles of the Nihilists in the

BEGGAR COLLECTING FOR A CHURCH FUND
(*After a Sketch by* Gorki

t again in his wo
ea-Gull," "Un
mas, novels, a
ted, hopeless, d
his country, an
ductions of many
side of him, but
heights of imagi-

ussian Literature
time of Maxim
tands for the new
hich the reforms
the preparation.
and imperfect as
l none the less
omic conditions.
ll-to-do middle-
irely from non-
; on the other,
Maxim Gorki

Seventies in all departments. At the threshold of the Century stalked the spectre of regicide, to which Alexander II. was the doomed victim . . . and over the future hovered the grim figure which banished its thousands and ten thousands of gifted young intellectuals to Siberia.

This period accordingly corresponded with a definite moral retrogression in the ethical condition of the Russian people.

There was a necessary reflection of it in the literature. This era produced nothing of inspired or reformatory force. A profound pessimism stifled all originality. Korolenko alone, who was living during the greater part of this time as a political prisoner in distant Yakutsk, where he did not imbibe the untoward influences of the reaction, remained unmoved and strong. Anton Chekhov, too, survived the gloomy years, and grew beyond them.

He did not, it is true, entirely escape the

influences of the time. He was the delineator of the deplorable social conditions under which he lived. But he deserves to be better known than he is to the outside public. His works everywhere express a craving for better things—for the reforms that never come. His men are helpless. They say indeed: "No, one cannot live like this. Life under these conditions is impossible." But they never rouse themselves to any act of emancipation. They founder on existence and its crushing tyranny.

Chekhov is none the less the gifted artist of many parts, and imbued with deep earnestness, who gave mature and valuable work to the men of his time, which, from its significance, will have an enduring after-effect, and will be prized for its genuine ability long after weaker, but more noisy and aggressive, talents have evaporated. He was, however, so finely organised that his brain responded to all the notes of his epoch, and he only emancipated

himself by giving them out again in his works of art. And so his "Sea-Gull," "Uncle Vanja," and other dramas, novels, and stories portray the blighted, hopeless, degenerate men of his day, his country, and its woes . . . like the productions of many others who worked alongside of him, but did not attain the same heights of imagination.

Such was the state of Russian Literature and Russian Society at the time of Maxim Gorki's appearance. He stands for the new and virile element, for which the reforms of the Sixties had been the preparation. These reforms, one-sided and imperfect as they may have been, had none the less sufficed to create new economic conditions. On the one hand, a well-to-do middle-class, recruited almost entirely from non-aristocratic strata, sprang up; on the other, an industrial proletariat. Maxim Gorki

emerged from this environment: and as a phenomenon he is explained by this essentially modern antithesis. He flung himself into the literary movement in full consciousness of his social standing. And it was just this self-consciousness, which stamped him as a personality, that accounted for his extraordinary success. It was obvious that, as one of a new and aspiring class, a class that once more cherished ideal aims and was not content with actual forms of existence, Gorki, the proletaire and railway-hand, would not disavow Life, but would affirm it, affirm it with all the force of his heart and lungs.

And it is to this new note that he is indebted for his influence.

Gorki, or to give him his real name, Alexei Maximovich Pjeschkov, was born on March 14, 1868, in Nijni Novgorod. His mother Varvara was the daughter of a rich dyer. His father, however, was only a

TARTAR DAY-LABOURER
(After a Sketch by Gorki)

poor upholsterer, and on this account Varvara was disinherited by her father; but she held steadfast to her love. Little Maxim was bereft of his parents at an early age. When he was three he was attacked by the cholera, which at the same time carried off his father. His mother died in his ninth year, after a second marriage, a victim to phthisis. Thus Gorki was left an orphan. His stern grandfather now took charge of him. According to the Russian custom he was early apprenticed to a cobbler. But here misfortune befell him. He scalded himself with boiling water, and the foreman sent him home to his grandfather. Before this he had been to school for a short time; but as he contracted small-pox he had to give up his schooling. And that, to his own satisfaction, was the end of his education. He was no hand at learning. Nor did he find much pleasure in the Psalms in which his grandfather instructed him.

As soon as he had recovered from the accident at the shoemaker's, he was placed with a designer and painter of ikons. But "here he could not get on"; his master treated him too harshly, and his pluck failed him. This time he found himself a place, and succeeded in getting on board one of the Volga steamboats as a scullion.

And now for the first time he met kindly, good-natured people. The cook Smuriy was delighted with the intelligent lad and tried to impart to him all that he knew himself. He was a great lover of books. And the boy was charmed to find that any one who was good-tempered could have relations with letters. He began to consider a book in a new light, and took pleasure in reading, which he had formerly loathed. The two friends read Gogol and the Legends of the Saints in their leisure hours in a corner [illegible] deck, with the boundless steppes of [illegible]ga before them, lapped by the music

of the waves that plashed against the sides of the vessel. In addition, the boy read all that fell into his hands. Along with the true classics he fed his mind upon the works of unknown authors and the play-books hawked about by travelling pedlars.

All this aroused a passionate, overpowering thirst for art and knowledge in Gorki when he was about fifteen. Without a notion of how he was to be clothed and fed during his student life he betook himself to Kasan to study. His rash hopes soon foundered. He had, as he expressed it, no money to buy knowledge. And instead of attending the Schools he went into a biscuit-factory. The three roubles (then 5*s.*), which was his monthly salary, earned him a scanty living by an eighteen-hour day. Gorki soon gave up this task, which was too exhausting for him. He lived about on the river and in the harbour, working at casual jobs as a sawyer or porter. At this time he had no

roof, and was forced to live in the society of the derelicts. What Gorki must have suffered in this company, during his struggle for the bare means of subsistence, may be imagined — he sounded the lowest depths of human life, and fell into the blackest abysses.

With the best will, and with all his energies, he was unable to attain any prospect of brighter days, and sank deeper and deeper into the existence of the castaway.

In his twentieth year he gave up the struggle. Life seemed to him devoid of value, and he attempted suicide. The ball from the revolver entered his lung without killing him, and the surgeon managed to extract it. Gorki was ill for some time after this event, and when he recovered set about finding new work.

He became a fruit-vendor, as before reading all kinds of scientific and literary works h avidity. But this profession brought

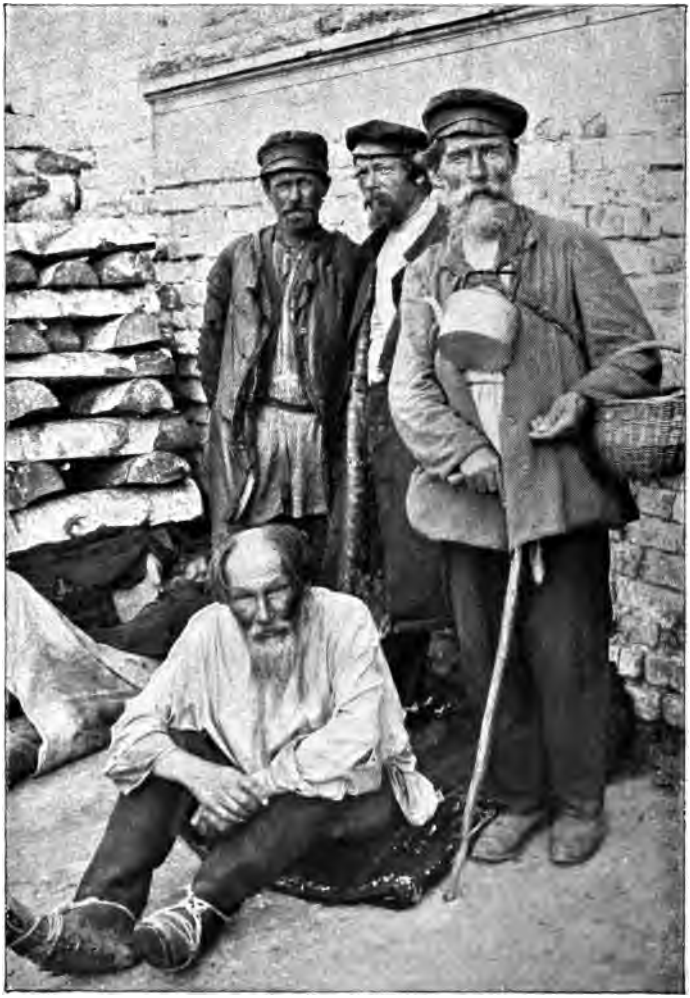
him no farther than the rest. He then went to Karazin as signalman and operative in the railway works.

However, he made no long stay on the railway. In 1890 he was obliged to present himself at Nijni Novgorod, his native place, for the military conscription. He was not, however, enrolled on account of the wound that remained from his attempt at suicide.

In Nijni Novgorod he became acquainted with certain members of the educated classes. At first he wandered up and down selling beer and kvass—filling the cups of all who wished to drink. . . . But he was driven to fare forth again, and again took up the life of a vagrant and a toper. In Odessa he found occupation in the harbour and the salt-works. Then he wandered through Besserabia, the Crimea, the Kuban, and eventually reached the Caucasus. At Tiflis he worked in the railway sheds. Here he once more fore-gathered with educated people, particularly

with some young Armenians. His personality and already remarkable mental equipment secured him their friendship. A derelict student, whom he afterwards described under the name of Alexander Kaluschny, taught him to write and cypher. He gave keen attention to the physical states of an insane friend, who was full of the Regeneration of Mankind, and entered his observations in his note-book. Gorki possesses a vast number of these note-books, in which he has written down his impressions. At this period he was also studying the great poets, Shakespeare, Goethe, Byron. Most of all he admired Manfred, who dominated the Elements and Ahriman. Everything out of the common inspired him.

It was at this time that he began to do literary work, in the utmost secrecy. His story, "Makar Chudra," appeared in 1893 in the Caucasian journal *Kavkas*, but he was as yet unable to make his living by intellec-



TRAMPS—THE SEATED FIGURE IS THE ORIGINAL OF LUKA

(After a Sketch by Gorki)

tual pursuits, and was still compelled to be Jack-of-all-trades. It occurred to him to muster a travelling company. He strapped up a small bundle and sallied forth. By April he had enlisted others of like mind. A woman and five men presented themselves. The troup increased on the way . . . but Gorki had to dree his weird alone, and returned to Nijni Novgorod.

A fortunate accident brought him into relation with the lawyer Lanin, a true friend to modern literature, who was not slow to appreciate the talent that had found its way to his bureau, and occupied himself most generously with the education of the young writer.

Gorki now wrote his first long story. Various friends of literature soon began to take notice of him. They sent him to the famous Vladimir Korolenko, who was then living in Nijni Novgorod, and editing the paper, *Russkoe Bogatstvo.* Korolenko was

much interested in Gorki, but was unable at that time to offer the young writer any remunerative work. Gorki was obliged to eke out his living by contributing to small provincial papers. He shared the same fate as so many of his fellow journalists. None of the editors offered any sort of honorarium, but simply returned his contributions, when, as happened with one of the Odessa journals, he asked three kopecks a line from it. This same paper, however, commissioned him to write a report of the World's Fair at Nijni Novgorod in the year 1896.

Gorki gladly agreed, and his reports excited general attention. But they were shockingly remunerated, and he was forced to live under such wretched conditions that his lungs became affected.

Korolenko now exerted himself seriously on Gorki's behalf. And the advocacy of a power in the literary world effected what all his highly characteristic achievements had

not accomplished for him. It made him known and desirable. New journals enlisted him as a permanent colleague on their staff. Henceforward existence was no concern to the literary vagabond, who on his own showing had had four teachers: the cook on the Volga steamer, the advocate Lanin, the idler whom he describes in Kaluschny, and Korolenko.

Seldom is it the case that an author comes to his own as early as Gorki. This was undoubtedly due to the courageous manner in which he struck out into the social currents that were agitating his country. And the rapid impression he made was due as much to the peculiar conditions of the Russian Empire as to his own talent. There, where there can be no public expression of schemes for the future, no open desire for self-development, Art is always the realisation of greater hopes than it can be where a free

path has already been laid down. And it is thus that men like Gorki can exert an overwhelming influence which is absolutely inconceivable to other nationalities. It is not merely the result of their artistic temperament. It derives at least as strongly from their significance to Humanity, their effect upon culture, their aggressive energy.

On the other hand, it would be a perversion to ascribe the success of such individuals to circumstances alone, and to what they say, and the inflexible virile courage with which they say it. Talent, genius, the why and wherefore, are all factors. In Russia there are not a few who share the experiences and insight of Gorki. But they lack means of expression; they are wanting in executive ability.

Not that many capable men are not also on the scene at present. But maybe they are not the "whole man," who puts the

— „Непримиримый врагъ позорной нищеты людскихъ желаній — хочу, чтобъ каждый изъ людей былъ Человѣкомъ!"

— „Безсмысленна, позорна и противна вся эта жизнь, въ которой непосильный и рабскій трудъ однихъ безслѣдно весь уходитъ на то, чтобы другіе пресыщались и хлѣбомъ, и дарами духа".

„Человѣкъ" М. Горькій

A PAGE FROM GORKI'S LAST WORK

(Transcribed and forwarded by the author to Hans Ostwald)

"As an implacable foe to all that is mean and paltry in the aspirations of Humanity, I demand that every individual who bears a human countenance shall really be—a MAN!"

"Senseless, pitiful, and repulsive is this our existence, in which the immoderate, slavish toil of the one-half incessantly enables the other to satiate itself with bread and with intellectual enjoyments."

From "Man." By Maxim Gorki.

matter together, without fear or ruth, as Gorki has done so often.

It is vain for Maximovich Pjeschkov not to term himself *Gorki*, the "Bitter One." He opposes a new Kingdom of Heroes in contrast to the old hero-world, to the great strategists and wholesale butchers. Bluebeard and Toggenburg, Richard Cœur-de-Lion—what are these bloody tyrants for us of to-day? It is impossible to resuscitate them as they were of old. They were,—and have become a form, in which the exuberant and universal Essence of Life no longer embodies itself.

But . . . we must have our Heroes still; heroes who master their lives after their own fashion, and who are the conquerors of fate. We cry out for men who are able to transcend the pettiness of every day, who despise it, and calmly live beyond it.

And Gorki steps forward with the revela-

tion of the often misrepresented Destitutes—or the homeless and hearthless—who are despised, rejected, and abused. And he makes us know them for heroes, conquerors, adventurers. Not all, indeed, but many of them.

The sketch entitled "Creatures that once were Men," which is in a measure introductory to the famous "Doss-house" ("Scenes from the Abysses") is especially illuminating.

Here we have the New Romance. Here is no bygone ideal newly decked and dressed out, trimmed up with fresh finery. It is the men of our own time who are described.

Whether other nations will accept such heroes in fulfilment of their romantic aspirations may be questioned. It seems very doubtful. The "Doss-house" is for the most part too strong for a provincial public, too agitating, too revolutionary. The Germans, for example, have not the deep religious feeling of the Russian, for whom each individual is a fellow sinner, a brother

to be saved. Nor have they as yet attained to that further religious sense which sees in every man a sinless soul, requiring no redemption.

To us, therefore, Gorki's "creatures that once were men" appear strange and abnormal types. The principal figure is the ex-captain and present keeper of the shelter, the former owner of a servant's registry and printing works—Aristides Kuvalda. He has failed to regulate his life, and is the leader and boon companion of a strange band. His best friend is a derelict schoolmaster, who earns a very fair income as a newspaper reporter. But what is money to a man of this type? He sallies forth, buys fruit and sweetmeats and good food with half his earnings, collects all the children of the alley in which Kuvalda's refuge is situated, and treats them down by the river with these delicacies. He lends the best part of his remaining funds to his friends,

and the rest goes in vodka and his keep at the doss-house.

Other wastrels of the same type lodge with Kuvalda. They are all men who have been something. And so Gorki calls them *Bivshiye lyudi*, which may be literally translated "the Men Who Have Been" ("Creatures that once were Men").

To our taste the story is too discursive and long-winded. The prolonged introductory descriptions, the too exact and minute particularities of external detail, especially in regard to persons, destroy the sharp edge of the impression, and obliterate its characteristics. It would have been clearer with fewer words. Honesty bids us recognise a certain incapacity for self-restraint in Gorki.

This, however, is a trifle compared with the vivid, impersonal descriptions of the conduct of the derelicts—illuminated by the heroic deed of Kuvalda, as by an un-

quenchable star. Kuvalda loses his mainstay when his comrade, the schoolmaster, dies. He is enraged at the brutal treatment meted out to him and to the other inhabitants of the slum by the Officials of the City and the Government. He embroils himself with ill-concealed purpose with his deadly enemy the merchant Petunikov and insults the police. His object is gained. He is beaten, and led away to prison.

Unfortunately Gorki endows his characters with too elevated a philosophy. He pours his own wine into their bottles. Vagabonds and tramps do often indeed possess a profound knowledge of life peculiar to themselves, and a store of worldly wisdom. But they express it more unconsciously, more instinctively, less sentimentally, than Gorki.

From the artistic point of view this ground-note of pathos is an abiding defect in Gorki. He is lacking in the limpid clarity

of sheer light-heartedness. Humour he has indeed. But his humour is bitter as gall, and corrosive as sulphuric acid. "Kain and Artem" may be cited as an instance.

Kain is a poor little Jewish pedlar. Artem, the handsome, strong, but corrupt lover of the huckstress, is tended by him when he has been half-killed by envious and revengeful rivals. In return for this nursing, and for his rescue from need and misery, Artem protects the despised and persecuted Kain. But he has grown weary of gratitude—gratitude to the weak being ever a burden to strong men. And the lion drives away the imploring mouse, that saved him once from the nets that held him captive—and falls asleep smiling.

This sombre temperament determines the catastrophe of the other stories. They almost invariably close in the sullen gloom of a wet March evening, when we wonder afresh if the Spring is really coming.

THE BARE-FOOTED BRIGADE ON THE VOLGA-QUAY,
AT NIJNI NOVGOROD
(After a Sketch by Gorki)

In "Creatures that once were Men," Gorki's sinister experience and pathos are essential factors in the accusing symbolism. He relates in the unpretending style of a chronicler how the corpulent citizens reside on the hill-tops, amid well-tended gardens. When it rains the whole refuse of the upper town streams into the slums.

ND YET IT IS JUST THIS sombre pathos and experience that compel us so often to recognise in Gorki's types a new category of hero. They are characterised by their sense of boundless freedom. They have both inclination and capacity to abandon and fling aside all familiar customs, duties, and relations.

It is a world of heroes, of most romantic heroes, that Gorki delineates for us. But the romance is not after the recipes of the old novelists: ancient, mystic, seeking its ideals in the remote past. This is living, actual romance. Even though some of Gorki's heroes founder like the heroes of bygone epochs of literature upon their weakness, more of the "Bitter One's" characters are shipwrecked on a deed.

And it is this reckless parade and apotheosis of such men of action that accounts for Gorki's huge success in comparison with many another, and with the writers of the preceding generation. It is for this that the young minds of his native country rally round him—the country that is loaded with clanking fetters.

Gorki is dominated by a characteristic passion for strong, abnormal men. This type reappears in almost all his narratives. Here it is old Isergil, whose Odyssey of Love swells to saga-like magnitude. There we find the bold and fearless smuggler Chelkash, in the story of that name. Now it is the brazen, wanton, devoted Malva, who prefers the grown man to the inexperienced youth. Anon, the red Vaska, boots and janitor of the brothel. And there are numbers of other such titans.

Unfortunately Gorki endows many of

them with a vein of sentimentality, on which account his works are compared with those of Auerbach, in certain, more particularly in the aesthetic, Russian circles . . . a reproach that is only partially justified. Emelyan, *e.g.*, is a notorious and professional robber. He sallies forth to attack and plunder a merchant in the night. But he encounters a young girl of good social position on the bridge which he has chosen for the scene of his attack. She intends to make away with herself. And in talking to her he forgets everything else ; she moves him so profoundly that he dissuades her from suicide and takes her back to her parents.

Despite its rank improbability and sentimental character this tale has a fine humour of its own. And there is, in particular, one sketch that is steeped in humour. This is the "Story of the Silver Clasp." Three casual labourers break into an old factory and steal a silver clasp. One of them relinquishes his

share and takes back the clasp. And all the thanks he gets is a rating from the old housekeeper.

These, of course, are only accessory productions, artistic enough, but of a lighter character. Many of the tales unfortunately suffer from a hackneyed use of situations, materials, and ideas, suggestive of the hack writer. Gorki's cheap sentiment, and maudlin pity, often result in clap-trap and padding which are foreign to the artist proper. But this is the effect of his predilection for individuals of forcible character.

Gorki is always partial to despotic characters. And here and there he has succeeded in creating men, who take life into their own hands, instead of letting it take them in hand.

It was inevitable that a writer who makes positive affirmations about life should receive a peculiar welcome in Russia, where a gloomy

pessimism has obtained the preponderance in literature. Gorki's conception of life is expressed in the words of the engine-driver Nil, in "The Bezemenovs" . . . a sympathetic figure, even if he be something of a braggart. Nil, who is almost the only cheerful and courageous man amid a handful of weaklings and degenerates, says:

"I know that Life is hard, that at times it seems impossibly harsh and cruel, and I loathe this order of things. I know that Life is a serious business, even if we have not got it fully organised, and that I must put forth all my power and capacity in order to bring about this organisation. And I shall endeavour with all the forces of my soul to be steadfast to my inward promptings: to push my way into the densest parts of life, to knead it hither and thither, to hinder some, to help on others. It is *this* that is the joy of life!" . . .

Words like these were bound to have a

LOVE-SCENE BETWEEN POLJA AND NIL

(*Act III. of "The Bezemenovs"*)

stimulating and invigorating effect after the despondency of the preceding epoch. This new spirit, this new man, gripped his contemporaries in full force.

The result would undoubtedly have been even more striking if Gorki's heroes were not invariably tainted with vestiges of the old order. They are, indeed, men of action. A totally different life pulsates in Gorki's works; we are confronted with far more virile characters than in the works of other Russian authors. Even the engine driver Nil, however, fails to relieve any one of the sufferers from his troubles. He removes Polja confidently enough from her surroundings—but only leaves the greater darkness behind him. Even he is as yet unable to transform the conditions of life—and he is therefore stigmatised by a little of the Russian bluster.

"The House of the Bezemenovs" ("The Tradespeople"), Gorki's first dramatic work,

describes the eternal conflict between sons and fathers. The narrow limitations of Russian commercial life, its *borné* arrogance, its weakness and pettiness, are painted in grim, grey touches. The children of the tradesman Bezemenov may pine for other shores, where more kindly flowers bloom and scent the air. But they are not strong enough to emancipate themselves. The daughter tries to poison herself because her foster brother, the engine-driver Nil, has jilted her. But when the poison begins to work she cries out pitifully for help. The son is a student, and has been expelled from the university. He hangs about at home, and cannot find energy to plot out a new career for himself. The weariness of a whole generation is expressed in his faint-hearted, listless words, as also in the blustering but ineffective rhodomontades of the tipsy choir-singer Teterev. All cordial relations between parents and children are lacking in this house.

It is refreshing to come upon the other characters, who are of a different breed to these shop-keepers. The vodka-loving, jolly father of Polja (Bezemenov's niece, who is exploited and maltreated in this house), is, in his contented yet sentimental egoism, a true representative of the ordinary Russian, the common man. And Polja! And Nil! . . . Here is the fresh blood of the future. How sure they both are in their love. "Ah! what a beautiful world it is, isn't it? Wondrously beautiful . . . dear friend. . . . What a glorious man you are. . . ."

Albeit this work is far from being a finished drama, it none the less has its special qualities. These men often talk as glibly as if they were essayists, they often seem to be mere vehicles for programmatic manifestoes. But as a whole they are the typical quintessence of the Russian people.

Other wild and intrepid figures are to be

found in the larger works that precede "The Tradespeople"—the novels "Foma Gordeyev" and "Three Men." But Gorki's new conception of life is less clearly and broadly formulated in these than in Nil, and other subsequent characters. These people rather collapse from the superabundance of their vigour and the meanness of their surroundings.

In "Foma Gordeyev" Gorki flagellates the unscrupulous Russian wholesale dealer, who knows of nought beyond profit and the grossest sensual indulgence, and lets his own flesh and blood perish if they require of him to budge a hand-breadth from his egoistic standpoint. Foma, who is not built for a merchant, and who, while ambitious of command, is too magnanimous for the sordid business of a tradesman, has to give in. And the children of his triumphant guardian can only escape poverty by accepting their surroundings.

GAMBLING SCENE

(*Act II. of "The Doss-house"*)

Despite its agonies and martyrdoms, however, there is one marvellously inspiring feature about this novel,—its gorgeous descriptions of Nature, rich in life and colour. "Foma Gordeyev" is the romance of life on the Volga.

With what intimacy, familiarity, and heartfelt emotion Gorki here describes and sees! The great River, with its diversified characteristics, its ominous events, mingles with the life of Man, and flows on past us. . . .

It is this characteristic union of the Human-All-Too-Human with his impressions of Nature in so many of Gorki's works, that makes them at the outset desirable and readable to a large proportion of his public. Much of his description of life beyond the social pale would be repulsive if it were not for this interpretative nature-painting. Especially would this be the case in "Malva." This robust, free-loving, and free-living maiden attracts us by her vigorous participation in

Nature, when, for instance, she leaps into the water, and sports in the element like a fish.

Gorki's countless wanderings through the Russian Steppes, his sojourns by the southern shores of the Russian Seas, are intimately interwoven with the course of Nature, and have given him poetic insight and motives which are ignored by other authors, who have grown up in the University, the Bureau, or the Coffee-houses of large towns. His life of poverty has made him rich. He has evolved some significant prose-poems from the life of Nature, and the contest of her forces. While the sketch, "Spring Voices," is a satire, bristling with tangible darts and stings, "The Bursting of the Dam" expresses the full force that rages and battles in a stormy sea. The unemancipated workers construct steep, rocky dams that jut out into the free, unbridled sea. The waves that so long rolled on merrily, without fell intent, are now con-

A CONFABULATION

fined, and beat against the hard, cold, sullen rocks. The winds and tempests join in a colossal attack upon the unyielding barriers, and the rocks are shivered in fragments.

Quite different again is the romance entitled "Three Men" (or "Three of Them"). The tales and sketches published prior to this work were merely founded on episodes, catastrophes, or descriptive passages from the author's rich store of material. They certainly conveyed the essence of the life of his characters. They disclosed the axis of these people's existence. But they are seldom free from a certain tiresome impressionism—and often make quite undue pretensions. The didactic is too obvious. Gorki is not always satisfied with saying, here is a bit of life. He tries to put in a little wisdom. His form is seldom clear and conclusive. His tales are overladen with detail and superfluity of minute description. In Germany, Gorki

owes much to his translators. This is more especially obvious in the scholarly translation by August Scholz of "Makar Chudra," Gorki's first published work. At first Scholz only produced a portion of this story. Later on, when all that Gorki had written had its importance, and his commercial success was established, the whole of "Makar," which is by no means free from obscurities, was translated.

In the novel, "Three Men," Gorki leaves the world of vagrants. He describes people who are intermediate between the vagabonds and the settled classes, who find their peace and happiness neither with the tramps nor with the well-to-do. Many more than three men live in this romance through times and destinies of the utmost significance. The novel might more exactly be termed "Many Men," or even "No Men." It all depends on how you read your author. In last resort the characters of the book have all

something of the humanly-inhuman about them.

This book is one of the most impressive works of our Russian author. Its large touches portray human life as it is, not only in Russia, but everywhere. The moujik who drifts into the City proletariat suffers from the life that whispers its secrets within and around him. "Why are men doomed to torment each other thus?" It frets and consumes him, weighs him down, and flogs him on again. And from this problem, which in the hands of many would only have resulted in a satire, Gorki creates a powerful tragedy. The aspiring proletaire, be he peasant or child of the artisan, is for the most part done to death with light laughter. In this the unjustified arrogance of the academic classes expresses itself too frequently. Too often they discover only the comic element in the men who have emerged from the ranks, and who, while gifted with uncommon

energy and intelligence, can neither choose nor be chosen for any of the cultured professions. They fail to perceive that the influence of these men would have a refreshing and invigorating effect upon the whole life of the people. They miss the need of some such transfusion of "vulgar blood" into the higher forms of the body politic. They cannot admit that it is these very *parvenus* who are the founders of new families and a new civilisation. Nor that many chasms must for ever be left yawning. They do not appreciate the peculiar pride which Gorki expresses in this romance, in such a classic and touching manner, in the character of the girl student. Nor do they perceive that these aspirants possess much that is lacking in themselves—and that not particularly to their credit. Gorki knows that aspiration is not fulfilled without inward struggle and travail. And it is with a subtle psychological instinct that he endows the men who are

CONCLUDING SCENE
(*Act III. of "The Doss-house"*)

struggling upward out of adversity with a deep craving for purity. Noble souls are invariably characterised by greater sensitiveness to delicacy, and this is equally the characteristic of those who are yearning to rise above their low environment. It is not from external filth alone that a man seeks to cleanse himself, but from inward corruption also. And so he strives, and strives again, for purity—and falls the deeper in the mire.

Few writers share the happy recklessness peculiar to Gorki. He is free from false modesty, like his young moujik, who is compelled by his desire for purity—not by any conventional remorse—to proclaim his relations with his landlady and commercial partner, the shopkeeper's wife, before all their acquaintances, at one of her entertainments —and also to announce himself as the murderer of the old money-lender. Nor is it the guilty sense of Raskolnikov that impels this moujik to confession and reparation. It is

his repugnance for the men in contrast with whom he stands out as an ideal and promising figure.

And it is here that Gorki seems to us almost to surpass Dostoevsky. Raskolnikov is a murderer on theory, a penitent out of weakness. Gorki's murderer, however, kills from inward compulsion. His act, his acknowledgment of it, all is sheer naïve necessity. Here is a man who feels no compunction for having crushed a worm.

Who, in last resort, is the man that repents his deeds? Of all the criminals we have encountered in doss-houses, shelters, and labour-colonies, scarce a single one. And the deed came nearly always like a flash from the blue. Implacable, dire, and for the most part unconscious compulsion, but no premeditated volition, drove them to it. And here Gorki is a true creator, even if as artist he ranks below Dostoevsky.

The characterisation of the men is beyond

THE ACTOR

(*From "The Doss-house"*)

reproach. Each has his purpose, and bears upon the murderer: the women, however, are not wholly satisfactory.

Gorki is crushingly ruthless to the wives of the householders and officials. He heaps them with vices. They are not merely vulgar in money matters. They are pitiful in their sexual affairs, and, in fact, in all relations. Gorki's harlots on the contrary always have some compelling, touching, noble trait. One of the prostitutes bewails her wasted life. Another craves to share all the sufferings of the man who has committed murder for her sake. A third is possessed with a sudden passion for truth. And that in the Justice Room, though she knows that her lover, sitting opposite her, is doomed if she deserts him.

At this point Gorki seems, indeed, to have deliberately abjured his intimate knowledge of certain classes of the community. A prostitute always lies to the end. Particu-

larly for the benefit of her lover. Her life is essentially not calculated to make her a fanatic for truth. If she learns anything, indeed, in her persecuted and despised profession, it is the art of lying. Never during a prolonged acquaintance with brothels and houses of bad repute have we encountered a truth-loving prostitute. Gorki, however, needed her for his work. Her confession removes the last obstacle to the confession of the murderer. It cuts away the last prop beneath the undermined dam.

And yet it first arouses our suspicion of the probity and reality of Gorki's types. Why should he be so emotional in some places while in others he can be so hard and harsh? He has not yet arrived at representation without prejudice.

And then we ask: "How far can his characterisations in general be accepted?"

Gorki often sacrifices probability to

polemics. Too often he is merely the emotional controversialist. Bias and Life are with him not always welded into the harmonious whole, which one is entitled to claim from the genuine artist.

To the Teutonic mind the individual works of Gorki, *e.g.*, the novel, "Three Men," still appear gloomy and sombre. As a whole, too, they affect us sadly; they are oppressive.

Yet we must remember that Gorki attacks life with a certain primitive force and urgency, and that he has a passion for courageous and capable individuals. It is here that his experiences are to his advantage. They have steeled him. Each of his works presents at least one energetic, defiant man—as a rule, one who is outside the pale of society. In one of his sketches, Chelkash is a smuggler, a reckless fellow, who induces a poor peasant to serve as his

accomplice in a nocturnal burglary. This rustic is a contemptible creature. His avarice prompts him to fall on the smuggler and murder him for the sake of his gold pieces. The wounded Chelkash flings the money at him contemptuously. Gorki portrays the much-belauded moujik as a pitiable money-grubber, a detestable associate, who loses all higher motives in his struggle for the means of existence.

This, at any rate, is Gorki's belief: it is neither the householders nor the peasants who are the custodians and promoters of what is human and noble. For Gorki, magnanimity and honour are found almost exclusively among the degenerates and outlaws. This clear vision and imaginative insight that forces Gorki into the arms of the men who are outcasts from the life of the community must not be misinterpreted. All great writers put their trust in kings, or rogues, or revolutionaries.

VASILISSA

(Keeper of the "Doss-house"

Vigour and energetic enterprise flourish only where daily anxieties have had to be outworn. The poet needs men who stand erect, and live apart from the opinions of universal orthodoxy.

THE MEN OF "THE DOSS-house" are again of this type. They live in the recesses of a horrible cellar, a derelict Baron, a former convict, a public prostitute, and more of the same "cattle." One man who lodges there with his wife is pilloried, because as a worker he stands apart from them:

"'I am a man who works!'—as if the rest of us were less than he! Work away if it makes you happier!—why be so cock-a-hoop about it? If men are to be valued for their work, a horse would count for more than a man — at least it draws the cart . . . and holds its tongue about it."

And as they speak, so they live. They are all destitute; but they content them-

selves with carrying on a sort of guerilla warfare against the householders.

And yet for some of them this life of brawls and vodka, of theft and mendicancy, is a very hell. Especially for the thief Pepel. He would gladly rise to a purer life. Alone, he is not strong enough. But—with Natasha.

This Natasha is the sister of the woman who keeps the shelter, and who herself has relations with Pepel, and does not intend to let him slip through her fingers. She even wishes him to make away with her husband in order that she may live undisturbed with the thief.

This is repulsive to Pepel.

At this crisis the wanderer Luka makes his appearance. He wants to help every one. He is the apostle of goodness and humanity. He finds a tender word for the dying wife of the locksmith. He talks to the drunken actor about a Reformatory, where he can be

cured of his propensity for drinking. And he counsels Natasha to fly with Pepel from these depths of iniquity. The keeper of the refuge hears this. She torments her sister, and almost does her to death, with her husband's assistance. Pepel is off his head with rage, and actually fulfils the woman's wishes, by murdering her husband.

She is triumphant. And the wayfarer vanishes. In the last Act the other wastrels are collected together. They are trying to clear up their ideas of themselves, and of the world. One tells how the wanderer thought the world existed only for the fittest—as in the carpentering trade. All live—and work—and of a sudden comes one who pushes the whole business forward by ten years.

"Man is the reality . . . Man who alone is really great . . . All is in Man, all is for Man. . . . To the health of Man!" is the toast of the former convict Satin.

NASTJA

(Servant in "The Doss-house")

"Be Men!" is the new watchword for Russia. And thus for Russians the "Doss-house" came as a gospel, although Gorki has not yet wrought his materials into the supreme conflict that must result in a really great tragedy. "The Doss-house" is not that tragedy. It presents no titanic action, no mighty fate, no clashing shock to reveal the battle of the great natural tendencies in Man, and give an immeasurable lift to our conceptions of existence. There is still something that oppresses us—there is too much puling and complaint. Criticism as a whole has been deceived by the resounding and pathetic words which it has accepted as a profound philosophy. Philosophy, however, is for the study, not the stage. Our great philosophers have said all that Gorki has put into the mouth of his outcasts, and said it far more forcibly. His observations on the dignity of Man are his only original and impressive contributions.

The critics have gone astray in another direction also. They have insisted on the great compassion that radiates from the piece, as embodied in Luka, the wanderer, and have commended this pillar of light and salvation. And they have completely overlooked the fact that it is he who is responsible for most of the misfortunes. In last resort Luka brings help to no one, but only succeeds in embroiling the situation, and accelerating the catastrophe.

Gorki undoubtedly intended to describe a luminary. But he failed to carry out his purpose consistently. In spite of himself this apostle is unable to effect any good, too often does just the contrary. The action of this character reminds us of Gregor Werle in Ibsen's "Wild Duck."

From the purely technical standpoint, moreover, "The Doss-house" is full of defects. The great catastrophe is brought about by eavesdropping. As in the worst melo-

drama, the *intrigante* of the piece, the lodging-house keeper and mistress of the thief, appears in the background just at the most critical point of the confabulation between Pepel and his allies, and the vagrant Luka.

A great work of art should scorn such cheap expedients. Nor are the whining descriptions given by several of the castaways of their mode of existence, properly speaking, dramatic; they only induce false sympathy.

The same capital fault is evident in Gorki's other productions. We have already touched on the defects of "Three Men." In "The Doss-house" again, our author has struck several wrong chords in his characterisation. He has failed to present the tragedy of the derelicts; nor has he in one single instance given a correct artistic picture of the occupants of the shelter. As an environment, the doss-house is interesting enough, but it is imperfect and inadequate. In his effort to bring these men into touch

with his audience, Gorki credits them with over-much virtue. On one occasion the thief requires the outcast baron to bark like a dog. The baron replies: "I am aware that I have already sunk deeper than you wherever this is possible." And it is only after a pause that the thief is able to reply: "You have confounded me, Baron"

This is no speech for men of this type. Gorki turns himself here into a sentimentalist. The baron should have answered this proposal that he should "bark" somewhat as follows: "What will you pay me? Hum! What can you offer me—a good place?" Or suggested him knocking him over the head. Then we should have had a drastic representation of the depraved derelicts. Description is wanted, not sophistry. Philosophising and quibbling over personality is a poor expedient, and one rejected by first-class writers.

It may be alleged that a work of imagination need not be true to nature. But Gorki

THE BARON

(*From "The Doss-house"*)

undoubtedly aims at producing an effect of fidelity to nature, to serve his emotional objects. To our mind, however, he would have produced a far more direct and vigorous impression if he had painted the depravity of the baron and his associates with stronger and more artistic touches, that is, if he had been hard and ruthless, like Maupassant in so many of his sketches. We want instances of corruption, not nice talk about it.

On one point Gorki is absolutely right: "The Doss-house" is not a tragedy, but a succession of detached scenes, as he himself calls it. It has no serious pretensions to be a drama. It is almost entirely lacking in construction and in development, in crises or catastrophes resulting from character. It has been quite unjustly preferred to the German play, "The Weavers." Yet that is in another category. That is the classic tragedy of the masses. It contains all that can be demanded of a drama: climax, necessary

impulsion, catastrophe. It would not be easy to surpass this truly modern tragedy, even if it is less adroitly philosophical than "The Doss-house." Moreover "The Weavers" indicates a revolution in dramatic literature. "The Doss-house" is at most the corollary of this revolution. It presents no new developments in literary style: this is wanting, as in all Gorki's productions. And yet the work of the Russian has its points: the actors have most congenial parts, and talented players are willing to put their best and most telling work into it. "The Doss-house" had an unparalleled success when it was performed at the Klein Theater in Berlin. The splendid staging made a magnificent achievement of the "Scenes from the Abysses," which thrilled and held the audience like some colossal work of music. And the human value of the work entitles it to rank with the best that has been produced in recent years on the farther side of the Vistula.

Gorki has done well to describe the world and the stratum whence he emerged, and which he traversed, in his powerful works. His writings expound the New Russia. He himself is New Russia. He is the man who has overcome all life's obstacles.

And it is he who holds up new, courageous, virile men to his nation, men who have faith and will to live.

He is himself profoundly sympathetic. His works bring him in a large annual income. But he does not hoard it up. He does not clutch his money. He knows the value of a helping hand. In his heart, moreover, he is averse to open admiration. This was apparent in his refusal to accept the public homage offered him some two years ago in the Art Theatre of Moscow. Gorki was drinking tea at a buffet with Chekhov, at a first performance of "Uncle Wanja," when suddenly the two were surrounded by a crowd of curious people. Gorki exclaimed

with annoyance: "What are you all gaping at? I am not a *prima ballerina*, nor a Venus of Medici, nor a dead man. What can there be to interest you in the outside of a fellow who writes occasional stories." The Society Journals of Moscow wished to teach Gorki a lesson in manners, for having dealt so harshly with the appreciative patrons of the theatre. He replied with the delightful satire: "Of the Author, who aimed too high."

While many critics fall into ecstasies over anything that Gorki writes, he himself preserves the just perspective, as in the case of this public homage. No one has spoken as uncompromisingly of his theatrical pieces as himself. That alone proves him to be a clever, critical man. But it also shows him to be honourable, talented, and clear-headed. How few authors would, if they thought some of their own works of minor importance, straightway communicate the fact to their public?

Letter to Herr Max Reinhardt

" *To you, dear Sir, and to your Company, I send my portrait. I must apologise for not doing it before, but had no time. With it I send an album of sketches of 'The Doss-house,' as performed at the Art Theatre in Moscow. I do this in the hope of simultaneously expressing my gratitude to you for your performance of my piece, and of showing how closely you and your* ensemble *succeeded in reproducing Russia proper, in your presentation of the types and scenes in my play. Allow me to offer my most cordial thanks to you and to your collaborators for your energetic acceptance of my work. Nothing binds men together so truly as Art—let us join in a toast to Art, and to all who serve her truly, and have courage to portray the crude reality of Life as it is.*

" *Heartiest greetings to yourself and to your artists. I greatly regret my ignorance of the German language,*

and am ashamed of it. If I knew German, I could express my sincere thanks to you more plainly. With all my heart I wish you luck and success.

"*M. GORKI.*

"*NIJNI NOVGOROD,*
"*August 1, 1903.*"

Господину Максъ Г

Посылаю Вамъ М.
Вашимъ сами портре
долженъ былъ сдѣлать
успѣлъ. Посылаю также
ковъ съ пьесы „На днѣ"
стовъ московскаго х
театра. Дѣлаю это
ній выразить глъ-с
вашей мою благодар
вамъ мои пьесы, а
мню показать вамъ
и труппа Ваша подо
миновъ и сценъ мои
дѣйствительности.

Позвольте побла
щихъ товарищей
матеріальное отношен

Ничто не объединяетъ
какъ искусство так

[illegible]

К

[illegible]

го и тѣмъ, что служатъ всему не стра-
изображать суровую правду жизни
, какова она есть!

Крѣпко жму Вашу руку и руки
сыновъ вашихъ. Очень жалѣю, что не
нѣмецкаго языка. и стыжусь
о незнаніи. Если-бы я зналъ его
по нѣмецки, я-бы сумѣлъ свою
и проще выразить Вамъ мою
искреннюю благодарность.

Всего добраго Вамъ и
вашего успѣха отъ души желаю

М. Горькій.

Н.-Новгородъ.
Августъ 1-е
1903.

Hence we look forward with interest to Gorki's future contributions, whether in poetry or drama. It is significant of the man and his intellect that he has not allowed himself to be saddled by the Theatre Devil, but presses forward to fresh tasks and aims.

ENGLISH TRANSLATIONS OF GORKI'S WORKS

1. "The Orloff Couple," "Malva." Translated by E. Jakowleff and D. B. Montefiore (Heinemann), 1901.
2. "Foma Gordyeeff" ("Thomas the Proud"). Translated by I. F. Hapgood (Fisher Unwin), 1901.
3. "Makar Chudra." *Monthly Review*, 1901.
4. "The Outcasts," "Waiting for the Ferry," "The Affair of the Clasps." Translated by D. B. Montefiore, E. Jakowleff, and V. Volkhovsky (Fisher Unwin), 1902; reprinted 1905.
5. "Three of Them." Translated by A. Sinden (Fisher Unwin), 1902; reprinted 1905.
6. "Three Men." Translated by C. Horne, 1902.
7. "Tales from Gorki."

In the Steppe. Twenty-six of Us and One Other. One Autumn Night. A Rolling Stone. The Green Kitten. Comrades. Her Lover. Chums.	Translated by R. Nisbet Bain (Jarrold & Sons), 1902.

8. "Twenty-Six Men and a Girl."

My Fellow Traveller.
On a Raft.
Tschelkasch.

} Translated by E. Jakowleff, D. B. Montefiore, S. K. Michel. "Greenback Library," vol. i. (Duckworth & Co.), 1902.

9. "Song of the Falcon." Translated by E. J. Dillon, *Contemporary Review*, 1902, and "Maxim Gorky" (Isbister & Co.), 1902.

10. "Creatures that Once were Men" ("The Outcasts"). Translated by J. K. M. Shirazi. Introduction by G. K. Chesterton. (Alston Rivers), 1905.

Printed by BALLANTYNE, HANSON & Co.
London & Edinburgh

PG
3465
O82

Stanford University Libraries
Stanford, California

Return this book on or before date due.